

Sayers, Margery

From: Jai Lee <jailee2008@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:26 PM
To: BudgetTestimony
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Council members,

I am a father of two Howard County students. I am writing regards to the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget.

I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

I am hoping to hear good news.

Sincerely,

Jai Lee

Sayers, Margery

From: Mark & Ellen Bockelman <mark.ellen@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:51 PM
To: BudgetTestimony; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Council-members,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. Specifically, I am writing to support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal would enable the school system to provide much needed staffing to reflect the growth in our student population. Last year, budget constraints required the school system to implement cuts in para-educators and teacher supports, which have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers are already spending extra time working to meet the demands of the students. Due to the shortage of para-educators created by past year cuts and compounded by the growth in our student population, students who need extra help are not getting the needed services.

If the HCPSS budget is not funded at the requested level, not only would the school system not be able to provide the services needed by our county's children, but additional programs may have to be cut as well, including the elimination of musical instrument programs (band and strings) and the elimination of gifted and talented classes for accelerated students (which would in turn hurt Howard County's national standing as a leading example of excellence in education). Funding the school system in this county at the requested level stops the reduction in services and program cuts.

I realize that the requested funding for the HCPSS goes past the maintenance of effort from last year. As a tax-payer of Howard county, however, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children, and by doing so, our future.

Sincerely,
Ellen Bockelman

Sayers, Margery

From: Jung, Deb
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:32 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Testimony for 3/12 Residents' Budget Hearing for FY2021

From: Sylvia Hennesie <sylvia.hennesie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:23 PM
To: BudgetTestimony <BudgetTestimony@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Testimony for 3/12 Residents' Budget Hearing for FY2021

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

March 11, 2020

Howard County Executive, Dr. Calvin Ball
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Dr. Ball:

I write to you as a former educator within HCPSS and as a current parent of students in our school system, to ask that you fully fund our school system's budget request. We need more funding dedicated to our schools to support staff, infrastructure, and most importantly our students and their well-being.

I have been a resident of Howard County since I was five years old, when I moved to Columbia with my family in time to start Kindergarten at Stevens Forest Elementary School. I have cherished my upbringing in Howard County, and know that the education I received within HCPSS significantly supported my development and success throughout the years. I have strong positive memories of school and my teachers, which led me to wanting to become an educator myself.

I've been an Early Childhood Educator for over ten years, most recently teaching Kindergarten within HCPSS. I have seen the changes faced by schools and staff due to budget cuts, and know firsthand the difficulties this has caused for all those involved. Teachers are burning out from increased demands and less support - the sheer number of students we are trying to teach, love, and set up for success, combined with trying to balance administrative work, new curriculum, and changing reporting processes are all becoming too much. Students are having more frequent interruptions to learning due to extreme behaviors and lack of adequate support for students with significant social-emotional and academic needs. As a teacher, this was extremely defeating, and as a parent, knowing that my child at times is a bystander waiting to learn in her classroom, is heartbreaking. All students are entitled to have their needs met - however, this cannot be done by simply saying a classroom is inclusive. Schools need to have enough highly skilled staff and appropriate resources to bring this to fruition.

I mention all those challenges before even factoring in teachers' personal lives - I can speak from experience that it is

extremely difficult to maintain an appropriate work life balance as an educator within HCPSS. Mental health for staff and students is an issue. Unfortunately, due to the increasing stressors of work, I made the decision to resign earlier this school year at the end of January. Leaving my class mid-year was a devastating choice that I had to make, however it was necessary for my well-being and for my family. I do not want to see other teachers have to face this difficult realization, and know that with better supports, it does not have to be this way.

It is **critical** that funding is put in place to support smaller class sizes, appropriate adult to student ratios, and adequate human and material resources for our varied learning populations (specifically special education and English Language Learners). It is upsetting that different departments are having to compete with one another over funding, when in reality the success of all subsets of students is important to the continued growth of our county and our country's future. Students need access to subjects like the arts, technology, and gifted and talented resources, just to name a few. Teachers need access to staff to help with their professional development and curriculum implementation. They need para-educators, support staff, and interventionists to provide extra help for students in smaller settings as needed, and they need administrators available and able to have day to day school activities run well. Currently, **EVERYONE** is spread thin, regardless of their staffing position. Our county's population has continued to increase, however the educational resources have not done so in a meaningful way. If our county wants to retain the reputation our school system is known for, it is **imperative** that funding be put forth to retain educators so they are able to continue to give their very best to our students who deserve it. We cannot continue to make cuts to the education budget on the backs of students and educators.

I truly believe that our county is more than capable to make choices that show children are our priority. Our kids cannot wait.

Thank you,

Sylvia Hennesie
2019 HCPSS Teacher of the Year
(410) 499-1659
sylvia.hennesie@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: Jung, Deb
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:32 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Consider Our Kid's Future for the Proposed FY21 HCPSS budget!

From: Hlasko, Andrew <andrew.hlasko@hq.doe.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:33 AM
To: BOE@HCPSS.org; Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; N'Guessan-Gbe, Darrell <dn'guessan-gbe@howardcountymd.gov>; mavis_ellis@hcpss.org; BudgetTestimony <BudgetTestimony@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trentkittleman+verizon.net@ccsend.com
Subject: Please Consider Our Kid's Future for the Proposed FY21 HCPSS budget!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball, County Council and Members of the Board of Education

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. Please consider all available options before cutting any of the school budget for our kids in the Howard county public school system. Such budget cuts will impact all our kids including those in underserved and underprivileged communities. Eliminating music programs and reducing STEM oriented GT Programs will only serve to further limit existing educational opportunities for our kids. Some may think that Music classes are a luxury but in reality Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success. Please think of our kids futures and do not cut the FY 21 HCPSS educational budget!

Any potential cuts in para-educators or teacher support personnel will put significant pressure on our HCPSS teachers and administration. Our Teachers have been already over working hard to meet the many demands of our students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help or students who are from some of the underprivileged communities are not being attended or properly served.

As a tax-payer of Howard County, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Andrew Hlasko
13010 Red Maple Way
Dayton, MD 21029
Tel. 240-449-7863

Sayers, Margery

From: Jung, Deb
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:31 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Testimony
Attachments: EducaționCCTestiimony.docx

From: bdschmitt@verizon.net <bdschmitt@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:06 AM
To: Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; BudgetTestimony <BudgetTestimony@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To All It May Concern...

Attached you'll find my testimony concerning the budget, considering the hearing for March 12th is now cancelled.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Benjamin D. Schmitt

Benjamin Schmitt
7817 Whistling Pines Court
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Howard County Executive
Dr. Calvin Ball
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Wednesday, March 11th, 2020

Dear Dr. Ball and Members of the County Council,

My name is Benjamin Schmitt. I have been an art teacher in Howard County for 22 years. I grew up in Anne Arundel County, not knowing very much about Howard. Ironically, I came to Howard County after getting locked out of Anne Arundel, when hiring was frozen due to a tussle over funding between then County Executive John Gary and the Board of Ed.

I've made Howard County my home as a professional and as a parent. When my wife and I married, we decided to move here, raise a family and have our children attend the school system where we work so hard. That's why I'm here today. I'm asking you to fully fund the school system budget.

Some people say cuts can happen at the central office level, and that classrooms will have everything we need. I'm here to say that just isn't the case. There could be some changes, but there aren't enough reassignments or cuts at Central Office that would free up the money the school system so desperately needs.

When I started teaching, the school system looked very different. We had smaller class sizes, and the students and their needs were quite different. Our population of ESOL, children needing free & reduced meals, and special education students have all risen. On top of that, we are the fastest growing system in the state, and we now serve more children who suffered adverse childhood experiences. Class sizes have ballooned.

Yet, we don't have enough staff to serve these kids. Howard County taxpayers expect schools to do what's best for students, especially those that are the most vulnerable. That is exactly what teachers and staff want too. However, we're not given the funding to truly address all of the needs that walk in our doors on a daily basis.

We're at a critical point. Educators are leaving, and we who remain are stressed and anguished. This is a national crisis that we feel locally in every school. We've already had last year's Teacher of the Year resign. We shouldn't have to regretfully watch more walk away from the profession.

The decade of decisions to underfund while our student population is exploding, pits one educational need against another. In the end, we all lose. Students especially. Furthermore, when you consistently comment that "in order to fund the Supt.'s budget, you'd have to cut" police or fire services, that just creates more division in the county. I have friends, and union brothers and sisters who are in the HCPD and HCFD. Those kinds of incendiary statements pits community members against one another. It's not fair, and it's the kind of rhetoric that we see already dividing folks on the state and national level. I expect better of Howard County.

Look, when the fire department needed more funding, you as elected officials took a vote to increase the fire tax on my bill. I didn't balk at that, because my children have benefitted from emergency services. They both have a heart condition known as SVT (supraventricular tachycardia). My children have been rushed to the hospital several times due to their condition. I certainly appreciate our emergency services, and am happy to pay the fire tax.

Everyone benefits from a fully funded school system. We've had a vast number of people move to our county because of the school system. It is the largest employer in the county, and in reality, it is what drives the real estate market here. Retirees, empty nesters, and anyone that has owned their home for more than twenty years has benefitted from the school system when they go to sell their home. Developers also benefit from the school system, when they sell their freshly built homes for a premium, far more than other neighboring jurisdictions. Yet, we still haven't had a substantive bill pass that has developers paying their fair share for the school system and other infrastructure needs.

It's time for this body to step up, represent the community, and fully fund the HCPSS budget. It's what is right, just, and necessary for everyone. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Schmitt
bdschmitt@verizon.net

Sayers, Margery

From: Ruth L. Huang <Ruth_Huang@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: budget testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Councilmembers,

My name is Ruth Huang. I am an ESOL teacher at Phelps Luck Elementary School I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para- educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Please, listen to the teachers. We are important. The students are important. We need funding. We need it now!

Thanks for reading,
Ruth Huang

=====
Ruth Huang
ESOL Teacher
Instructional Team Leader
Phelps Luck Elementary School

Sayers, Margery

From: Seok PARK <seokpark@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Councilmembers,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Sincerely,

Seok Park

Sayers, Margery

From: david.carr <david.carr@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:54 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Councilmembers,

I am writing to ensure that constituent voices are being heard amongst the canceled meeting and the budget testimony email address not working properly

This email is regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is unacceptable to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level Stops the Avalanche of program cuts.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.
David Carr

Sayers, Margery

From: Pamela Sutkaytis <Pamela_Sutkaytis@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:15 PM
To: BudgetTestimony; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council members,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being assisted.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success. We have already lost language instruction, which is important for our children.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Thank you,

Pam ~

Pamela Sutkaytis
Teacher's Secretary
Phelps Luck Elementary School
410-313-6886

This email, including any attachments, is CONFIDENTIAL and may be legally privileged. If you are not an intended recipient or an authorized representative of an intended recipient, you are prohibited from using, copying or distributing the information in this email in error, please notify the sender immediately by return email and delete.

Sayers, Margery

From: Donald Snyder <dsnyder7903@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:09 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Councilmembers,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level. I want to make sure my voice is heard, especially because the forum was canceled.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is unacceptable to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level Stops the Avalanche of program cuts.

As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Both of our children have benefited greatly from the music program and other services that are under threat. We value Howard County specifically for its investment in education. Please maintain the budget.

Thank you,

Donald Snyder
5272 Bright Dawn Ct.

Sayers, Margery

From: Julia Roman-Duval <julia.romanduval@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:50 PM
To: BudgetTestimony; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Budget testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I was deeply concerned to learn about the plans for significant budget cuts to HCPSS, affecting music, the G/T program, and overall staff levels.

These staffing reductions and slashing of important programs such as music and G/T are unacceptable, given the profound impact they would have on the children's early education.

The Howard County School system prides itself for its high rankings in the country and the overwhelming success of its students. By proceeding with these budget cuts, the county is putting this path to success in serious jeopardy.

I would urge the Howard County to keep the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level and reconsider their plans to address the budget cuts.

Thank you for your consideration,

Julia Roman-Duval

Sayers, Margery

From: Elana Hoffman <elanadc@cs.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:44 PM
To: BudgetTestimony; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Budget testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Esteemed Councilmembers,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level. I am the parent of a 3rd grade student in a HCPSS elementary school.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts. As a tax-payer of Howard county, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Sincerely,
Elana Hoffman

Sayers, Margery

From: Jaclyn Bryant <Jaclyn_Bryant@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:22 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Note: Your BudgetTestimony@howardcountymd.gov email is broken and will not accept emails. Please count this among the budget testimony for the March 12th Hearing.

Dear Esteemed Councilpersons and County Executive Ball,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget on behalf of myself, my students, and all of my colleagues at Thunder Hill Elementary School to urge you to fully fund Dr. Martirano's budget request for Howard County Public Schools.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended. At Thunder Hill, this looks like students with emotional disabilities and other related disorders not having the one-on-one staffing they need in order to be successful during times of day where they are included with their peers – related arts. We have had to evacuate related arts classrooms multiple times just in the last 2 weeks because students with disabilities were not staffed appropriately and their behaviors became unsafe for the rest of the class. I have students who are in the band and strings program who need an aide in order to be successful in my class, but they never come with an aide because we are chronically understaffed and their aides are needed elsewhere. These students deserve the staffing they need in order to succeed, and other students deserve a safe, well-regulated learning environment.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to the families and students of THES! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success. Study after study has shown that studying instrumental music literally grows connections in students' brains – making them more robust thinkers in all areas of their lives. As HCPSS has made a push toward mindfulness, playing an instrument becomes even more vital in an era where we are trying to teach students the social skills they lack and healthy means of expression.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts.

As a constituent of HCPSS, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

--

Jackie Bryant
Band and Strings Teacher
Thunder Hill Elementary School
410-313-6922
[Ms. Bryant's Music Website](#)

Sayers, Margery

From: Jackie Bryant <jebryant7@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Note: Your BudgetTestimony@howardcountymd.gov email is broken and will not accept emails. Please count this among the budget testimony for the March 12th Hearing.

Dear Esteemed Councilpersons and County Executive Ball,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget on behalf of myself, my students, and all of my colleagues at Thunder Hill Elementary School to urge you to fully fund Dr. Martirano's budget request for Howard County Public Schools.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended. At Thunder Hill, this looks like students with emotional disabilities and other related disorders not having the one-on-one staffing they need in order to be successful during times of day where they are included with their peers – related arts. We have had to evacuate related arts classrooms multiple times just in the last 2 weeks because students with disabilities were not staffed appropriately and their behaviors became unsafe for the rest of the class. I have students who are in the band and strings program who need an aide in order to be successful in my class, but they never come with an aide because we are chronically understaffed and their aides are needed elsewhere. These students deserve the staffing they need in order to succeed, and other students deserve a safe, well-regulated learning environment.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is **unacceptable** to the families and students of THES! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success. Study after study has shown that studying instrumental music literally grows connections in students' brains – making them more robust thinkers in all areas of their lives. As HCPSS has made a push toward mindfulness, playing an instrument becomes even more vital in an era where we are trying to teach students the social skills they lack and healthy means of expression.

Funding the school system in this county at the requested level **Stops the Avalanche** of program cuts.

As a constituent of HCPSS, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sayers, Margery

From: Stacey Folkemer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:48 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: RE: HCPSS FY21 Operating Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members ,

Good afternoon,

I am writing about the recent decision to cut the funding for special education in the budget proposal for Howard County schools. Special education students are the most vulnerable students in the school system and the special education budget is already stretched way too thin. It's not fair to these students who are entitled to the same opportunities as their peers. The proposal to increase class size is also concerning. So many kids, both special ed and typically developing, will fall through the cracks if and when that happens.

I am the mother of a bright and curious 2 1/2 year old named Maggie. Maggie has Down syndrome and will be starting the county RECC program in the fall. She loves school and we're very excited for her to start, but we're also worried by the budget cuts and all of the negative press about special education in Howard County of late.

When Maggie was born we moved to Howard County specifically so she could get the best education in the state. Our taxes skyrocketed when we moved from Baltimore County to Howard County, but it was worth it to us so she could get the best. And now we're worried that isn't going to happen.

Thank you for listening. I hope you'll do the right thing and provide enough funding for all students to receive the world class education that Howard County likes to say it provides.

Stacey Folkemer
5242 Lightfoot Path
Columbia, MD 21044
443-538-7222

Stacey Folkemer
stacey.long2@gmail.com
5242 Lightfoot Path
Columbia, Maryland 21044